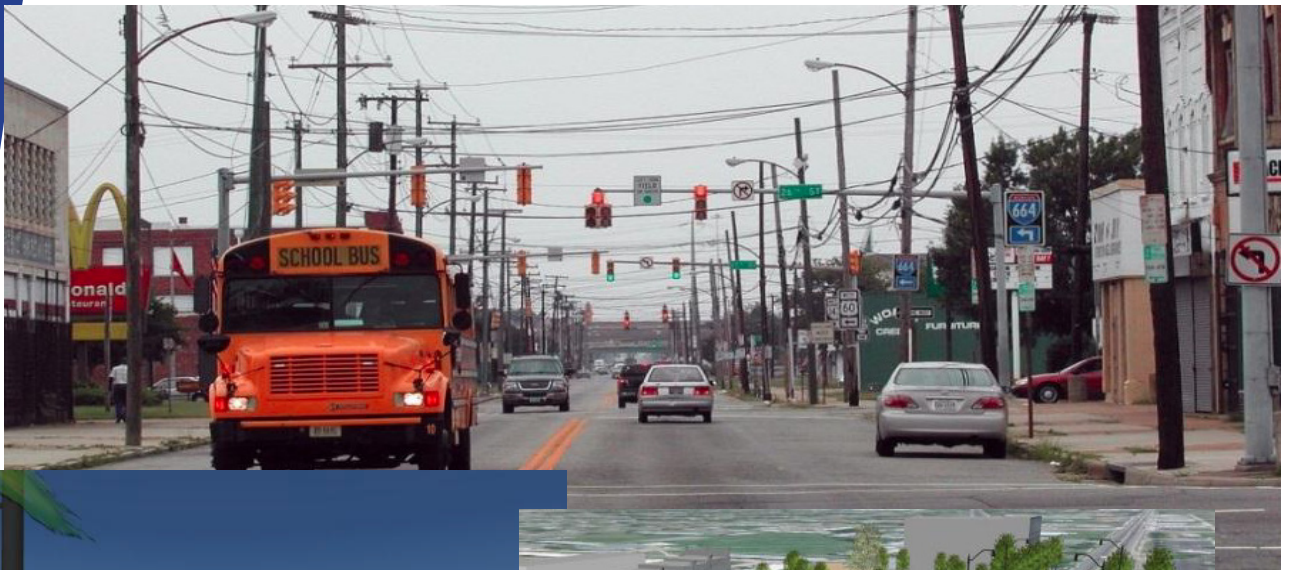


PLANNING COMMISSION

2013 ANNUAL REPORT



Chairman's Message



On behalf of the Newport News City Planning Commission, I am pleased to present the Commission's annual report of activities for 2013 to the City Council and citizens of Newport News. The Planning Commission makes land use recommendations on proposed development within the City which can be both complex and difficult to resolve. The Commission fulfills its responsibility of determining the best use of land by striking a fair and equitable balance between the desires of the property owners and the community's

needs. The Commission ensures a balance through its committees. The committees enable the Commission to focus on specific issues before they are presented and acted upon. The committees of the Commission include the Regulations Committee and the Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee. The Commission is also represented on the Regional Business District, the Subdivision Review Board, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Committee, and the Lee Hall Corridor Overlay District Committee.

In closing, the members of the City Planning Commission have enjoyed serving the City Council and the citizens of Newport News. We remain dedicated to improving our community by promoting orderly and wholesome growth. To this end, we encourage all citizens to become involved in our deliberations by attending or watching, on cable channel 48 or Verizon FiOS channel 19, future Planning Commission meetings.

Victor Albea



Planning Commission



Victor Albea, Chairman

Robert Jones, Vice-Chairman

Lorraine P. Austin

Cleon Long

H. Eugene Roberts

Elizabeth W. Willis

Mark W. Mulvaney

Michael F. Carpenter

Saundra N. Cherry

Membership

On the Planning Commission in January of 2013:

Sharyn L. Fox was replaced by
Mark W. Mulvaney

Clara P. Swanson was replaced by
Michael F. Carpenter

Wesley Maxwell was replaced by
Saundra N. Cherry



Department of Planning

MISSION STATEMENT

"To analyze, prioritize and plan for the balanced and sustainable use of the city's land and other resources to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations."

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF

Sheila W. McAllister, AICP

Executive Secretary/Director of Planning

Lynn A. Spratley

Deputy City Attorney

Melissa M. Leskovar

Administrative Assistant II/Recording
Secretary

PLANNING STAFF

Claudia Cotton

Manager of Current Planning

Michael S. King, AICP

Manager of Comprehensive Planning

Saul Gleiser

Senior Planner

Angela Y. Hopkins

Senior Planner

Flora D. Chioros, ASLA

Landscape Planner

Johnnie E. Davis

Planner

Sandra K. Hitchens

Planner

David F. Watson, AICP

Planner

Dedra M. Richardson

Administrative Coordinator

Kathleen McDonald

Administrative Assistant II

Applications Reviewed

The City Planning Commission deals with a variety of matters related to the future of the city of Newport News. Planning and zoning matters include the following:

Comprehensive Plan Amendment: The *Framework for the Future 2030* comprehensive plan is the policy plan for the development of Newport News. It sets forth policies and strategies for achieving the goals and vision of the city. Zoning of land within the city must be consistent with the *Framework for the Future 2030* comprehensive plan. If not, a plan amendment is required before a zoning change can be approved.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment: The Zoning Ordinance designates the types of land uses permitted in zoning districts in the city. It also provides for area, dimensional and other regulations necessary for those uses and zones to protect the public health, safety and welfare of citizens. These provisions require periodic review and change due to evolving development issues and opportunities.

Change of Zoning: A change of zoning is required when a property owner proposes to use land for purposes other than those permitted within the designated zoning districts.

Conditional Use Permit: A conditional use permit is required when a property owner proposes to use land for purposes other than those permitted by right within the designated zoning district, but may be permitted under certain conditions. Uses that can be requested through the conditional use permit process are identified in the Zoning Ordinance's summary of use matrix.

Special Exception: The Planning Commission reviews special exception applications for the Board of Zoning Appeals. The Commission forwards their recommendation to the Board of Zoning Appeals. A special exception can be approved if all the criteria for the exception, as identified in the Zoning Ordinance, are met.

Sign Ordinance Amendment: The Sign Ordinance specifies the amount of signage each use is permitted. Signage beyond that specifically required and any amendment to the ordinance must be reviewed and recommended by the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission's recommendations of all of the above planning matters, with the exception of special exceptions, are forwarded to City Council.

During the Calendar Year of 2013, the City Planning Commission processed 30 requests. A breakdown of type is as follows:

Type	Total	Percentage	Approved	Withdrawn	Denied	Pending
Change of Zoning	5	17	4	0	0	1
Text Amendments	6	20	6	0	0	0
Comprehensive Plan Amendments	2	7	2	0	0	0
Conditional Use Permits	12	40	10	0	2	0
Special Exceptions	2	7	2	0	0	0
Sign Ordinance Amendments	1	3	1	0	0	0
Stormwater Management Regulations (Chesapeake Bay Regulations)	1	3	1	0	0	0
Site Regulations Text Amendments	1	3	1	0	0	0
Total	30	100	27	0	2	1

Plans & Studies

Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Plaza: The Plaza is located at the corner of 25th Street and Jefferson Avenue, formerly JAMA Square. The Plaza reopened to the public during the fall of 2011. The BAS Relief by famed sculptor Ed Hamilton, to be located in the rear of the Plaza, is anticipated to be completed and installed in 2014.

Sign Ordinance Amendment: A staff committee comprised of several city departments worked on revisions to the city's Sign Ordinance. Research continued regarding other cities' success in controlling the proliferation of signs to allow for more orderly and easily understandable signs within the city. Staff is continuing to move forward with changes to the sign ordinance that include new regulations for electronic signs and changes to sign height.

Site Regulations: Engineering and Planning staffs worked on updates to the site regulations. Planning staff finalized clarifications and modifications to the landscaping and green area requirements and began review with the Regulations Committee.

Stormwater Regulations: As a result of state legislation and culminating after months of several city departments working with consultants, the stormwater regulations were reviewed by the Regulations Committee, Planning Commission and approved by City Council. This action brings the City of Newport News one huge step closer to meeting the new stormwater requirements set to become effective July 1, 2014.

Annual Apartment and Assisted Housing Survey: The Planning staff conducts annual surveys of the number and availability of apartments and assisted housing within the city.

Development Monitoring Report: The Planning staff publishes an annual Development

Monitoring Report which contains data on development activity in the city of Newport News. The reports include information on residential and non-residential subdivisions, site plans, buildings issued Certificates of Use and Occupancy, and zoning changes.

Comprehensive Plan Update - One City, One Future: In 2013, the city began the process to update its comprehensive plan. The Planning Department hired a consultant that conducted a "community survey" to ascertain citizens' perceptions and opinions of city services that began the update process. A citizen advisory committee was established, comprised of citizens and stakeholders from throughout the city, that meet regularly to assist staff with the development of the new plan. The plan will lay out a 20-year vision for the city.

The Mariners' Museum Trail: The Planning Department secured a Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) grant (approx. \$1.7 million) to fund the design and construction of a 1 mile multi-purpose trail parallel to Warwick Boulevard along the frontage of The Mariners' Museum property. The Department of Engineering is managing the project implementation. The trail will be located between the entrance to the Museum (Avenue of the Arts) south to Harpersville Road's intersection with Warwick Boulevard. The project is expected to be advertised for bid in spring 2014 and begin construction in FY 2015.

Peninsula Rapid Transit: HRT has requested funding from the state for a study of potential rapid transit corridors on the Peninsula, specifically in the cities of Newport News and Hampton. The study is expected to be completed by 2015.

Public Transit: Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) operates 15 bus routes in Newport News and receives over 300,000 boardings per month

Plans & Studies

from our city. Planning staff continued to work with HRT to improve bus ridership through service efficiencies and expand service delivery in the city as funding is available. The MAX, a Wi-Fi enabled express bus for business commuters now operates from the Newport News Transit Center to Norfolk, Chesapeake and Virginia Beach. Staff used CMAQ funds to install well designed bus shelters at key bus stops with solar lighting to allow for night lighting, something never offered before. A second phase of bus shelters at new locations will begin in 2014.

Passenger Rail: Amtrak currently runs two daily departures from Newport News. Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) will be expanding Amtrak intercity passenger rail service to Newport News by providing more frequent trips from Newport News to Richmond, D.C., New York and Boston. The city planning staff has begun plans to upgrade and relocate the existing Amtrak Station. Parsons Brinkerhoff has been retained to design a new multimodal station on Bland Boulevard near the Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport. The design is expected to be completed by 2015. CMAQ funds totaling \$18 million available in FY-2017 and FY-2018 have been programmed to construct the multi-modal station.

SCOT Center Relocation Study: The Service Center for Operations and Transportation (SCOT) Center is the primary transportation, vehicle maintenance and storage facility for Newport News Public Schools (NNPS). Located on a 39 acre site in Oyster Point between the Applied Research Center, Thomas Jefferson

National Laboratory and Canon, Virginia, the SCOT Center occupies one of the most strategic, publically owned properties in Newport News. Staff believes that there is a higher and better use for the SCOT Center and are working on plans, in cooperation with the School Division, to relocate the services provided by SCOT to a new location.

Jefferson Avenue Land Use and Corridor Study: The Planning staff has prepared and completed a draft study which re-evaluated the existing land use designations for properties located along Jefferson Avenue extending from 39th Street to Mercury Boulevard. The 2.2 mile long study area consisted of approximately 280 parcels totaling 178 acres. This study will be utilized during the comprehensive plan update process. It is anticipated to be adopted in 2014.

Neighborhood Conservation District: The Neighborhood Conservation District is an overlay district which prescribes standards for new construction and reconstruction of residential dwellings in one of the oldest areas of the city, the Southeast Community. In recent years, new construction and infill development has become more of a challenge for the established neighborhoods within this area. Planning staff analyzed the current regulations and hired a consultant to revise the regulations for adoption by City Council in 2014. Draft regulations were completed in 2013 and will be reviewed by the Regulations Committee, Planning Commission and City Council in 2014.

Executive Secretary's Message



The City Planning Commission reviewed and made recommendations on 30 requests in 2013.

The department saw two staff changes in 2013. The department lost two valued employees through retirement in 2012: Kathy James-Webb, Manager of Current Planning; and Eric Chen, Senior Research Planner and liaison for Sister Cities. Kathy James-Webb had served the city in the capacity of Planner II, Senior District Planner, Manager of Environmental Planning, and Manager of Current Planning for 25 years. Eric Chen had served the city in the capacity of Research Planner, Senior Research Planner, and liaison to the Sister Cities organization for 25 years. His service to the department and city as an ombudsman for Sister Cities was invaluable. The department gained a new Manager of Current Planning in 2013. She is Claudia Cotton, who replaces Kathy James-Webb. She comes to the position with at least 16 years of experience in Planning. We welcome her. In October of 2013, after working in the department as a Planning Technician for six years, Sandra K. Hitchens was promoted to the position of Planner I. I would like to congratulate her on her promotion and a job well done.

The Planning staff is finalizing its work on updating the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District to include design guidelines that will preserve architectural features prevalent in housing throughout the Southeast Community. This was done with the help of Alan Mountjoy with NBBJ, a consulting firm. Mr. Mountjoy assisted the Planning Department with the development of the Jefferson Avenue Corridor Overlay Study and the Southeast Community Urban Waterfront Design Study.

In 2013, the department began its update to the *Framework for the Future 2030* comprehensive plan by outlining a new process and evaluating firms to conduct a community survey. The new process included changing the name of the comprehensive plan to "One City, One Future" and combining the original five task forces to create one citizen advisory committee that, along with identified stakeholders, will work with staff to develop the next comprehensive plan for the city.

The department has been engaged with neighboring localities and the Peninsula Airport Commission staff on the update of the Newport News Williamsburg International Airport Master Plan. Completion of the plan is scheduled for 2014.

Planning staff is actively engaged with regional groups such as Hampton Roads Transit, and the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization.

Staff will continue supporting the activities of other City departments and the City Manager's office, including the ongoing support of the City Planning Commission, the Hilton Village and North End/Huntington Heights Architectural Review Boards, the Lee Hall Corridor Overlay Committee, and the Commemoration Advisory Commission. Staff support for the City Planning Commission involves the review of rezoning applications, conditional use permits, Zoning Ordinance text amendments, special exception applications and comprehensive plan amendments. Staff support for the Architectural Review Boards includes board training, updating guidelines and issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness.

I look forward to working with you on the challenges that await us in 2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sheila W. McAlister". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.



PLANNING COMMISSION

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